



PRESS NOTICE

BILL NETTLES UNITED STATES ATTORNEY DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FEDERAL GRAND JURY INDICTMENTS

U.S. Attorney Bill Nettles announced the return of the following indictments by the Federal Grand Jury:

COLUMBIA WOMAN CHARGED WITH EMBEZZLING OVER \$40,000.

Columbia, South Carolina ----Elaine P. Vastine, age 45 was charged in a one-count Indictment in connection with a scheme to embezzle over \$40,000 from her employer. Elaine P. Vastine is charged with credit card fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1029(a)(2). Mr. Nettles stated the maximum penalty for this charge is imprisonment of ten years.

Mr. Nettles stated that the case was investigated by agents of the United States Secret Service and that he has assigned the case to Assistant United States Attorney T. DeWayne Pearson of the Columbia office for prosecution.

GEORGIA WOMAN CHARGED WITH AGGRAVATED IDENTITY THEFT AND BANK FRAUD. Irmo, South Carolina ----Rhonda A. Harper, age 54 was

charged in a four-count Indictment in connection with a scheme to steal over \$150,000 from various banks in South Carolina. Rhonda A. Harper is charged with aggravated identity theft in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1028 A. Rhonda A. Harper is also charged with conspiracy to commit fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1349, bank fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1344 and credit card fraud in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1029(a)(2). Mr. Nettles stated the maximum sentence Ms. Harper could receive is thirty years imprisonment.

Mr. Nettles stated that the case was investigated by agents of the United States Secret Service and that he has assigned the case to Assistant United States Attorney T. DeWayne Pearson of the Columbia office for prosecution.

The United States Attorney stated that all charges in these Indictments are merely accusations and that all defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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